

Intonation



All fretted instruments are a compromise of easy playability against accuracy of pitch. On an unfretted instrument, such as a violin the player can adjust their fingering to achieve the perfect pitch of the notes they play. On a guitar the frets, and therefore the intervals between notes, are fixed. It's worth checking how accurate your instrument is from time to time. To do this you'll need an electronic tuner and the bridge has to have individual saddles that can be adjusted for string length. Tune the open (unfretted) strings accurately to standard concert pitch (E-A-D-G-B-E), then, starting with the high E, stop the string at the 12th fret using your normal finger-pressure. Check that the string gives a true octave, the tuner should show an in-tune E note. If the note is sharp then the length of the string needs to be increased by moving the saddle a small distance away from neck. If it shows as flat then the length of the string needs to be decreased by moving the saddle slightly closer to the neck. These adjustments are made via a screw either at the front or back of the saddle. Repeat the process for all the strings.

